

# Museum Commemorates 150-Year History Of the 3rd ACR

by Specialist Jamie J. Arundell

The dust from the road rose in thick and choking clouds in August, 1847. The members of the Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, enroute from the Battle of Contreras, Mexico, made their triumphant march into Mexico City. When the commander of American Forces, General Winfield Scott, rode up with members of his staff, he recognized the unit by their distinctive uniforms and weaponry. Choked up with emotion over the valor of his men, the General removed his hat, bowed low, and proclaimed: "Brave Rifles! Veterans! You have been baptized in fire and blood and have come out steel!"

Now, 150 years later, the "Brave Rifles," known today as the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment, continues to serve the nation and preserve the regiment's unique history. The 3d Cavalry Museum, founded at Fort Meade, Maryland in 1963, and now located at Fort Carson, Colorado, depicts 150 years of the Regiment's distinguished service to the nation as the second oldest regiment still in active service.

When the museum began over thirty years ago, it was just a simple regimental trophy room. However, the treasures it maintained, such as the Goodrich Riding Trophy and the most complete collection of regimental standards and doctrines,

were very unique to the Army. The museum also included the regimental adjutant's log that documented the earliest and most elite officers of the regiment, such as Jeb Stuart, John C. Fremont, and Samuel Walker.

Setting foot in the museum today, you will marvel at the elaborate collection of authentic exhibits and memorabilia of the Third Armored Cavalry Regiment. They include the treasured 150th Anniversary painting of the Regiment's victory at the Battle of Contreras by noted military artist Don Prechtel. The painting, entitled *Brave Rifles-Veterans*, displays the Regiment's victory at the Battle of Contreras, Mexico in 1847. Completed for the 150th Anniversary observance last June, the painting was unveiled and prints were made available during the ceremonies in the regimental area.

The main gallery features the permanent exhibit, *Track of the Regiment*, which traces the history and tradition of the Brave Rifles from its inception to the present day. Undoubtedly, the most valuable article in the collection of the Third Cavalry Museum is the original flag, created by the Ladies of New Orleans to honor "that gallant regiment which has been foremost in every battle... sustaining by the valor and sacrifices of its officers

and men the flag of our beloved country." The flag has been conserved to ensure it will remain a source of pride to the regiment for generations to come.

In addition to the permanent exhibits, displays change in the temporary gallery of the museum, ranging from art exhibits to special traveling exhibits on specific topics. For animated vis-



ual entertainment, the museum also features the "AIEEYAH!" theater, named after the regimental battle cry. The theater presents short films and slide presentations on cavalry and regimental history.

The museum also features an impressive outdoor display, the armored vehicle park, where you can view the vehicles used by the regiment since its mechanization prior to World War II. Within the larger armored vehicle park is the Desert Storm Park, which includes weapons and vehicles captured by the regiment in Operation Desert Storm. The combination of the outdoor and indoor exhibits takes you through the regiment's 40 campaigns in nine wars.

Since 1963, that small trophy room has matured into one of the finest museums in the country, certified by the United States Army and accredited by the American Association of Museums. The 3d Cavalry Museum has restated three times in the last 30 years; to Fort Lewis, Washington; Fort Bliss, Texas; and its present home: Fort Carson, Colorado. Through three moves and 150 years, the museum has evolved into a complete and accurate collection of Armored Cavalry's past; an exhibition of history definitely worth visiting. For more information and touring times, contact Mr. Paul Martin at (719) 5261404.

